

REFUGEE

Arizona Refugee Resettlement Journal

resettlement

Volume 7, Issue 2

March 2006

2006 ARIZONA REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 2006 RRP Annual Conference "Beyond Flight – Refugees in Arizona" will explore ways to improve assistance and services for refugees as

they begin to build new lives in Arizona. After fleeing war, ethnic or religious persecution, and often years of uncertainty in refugee camps, refugees face significant hurdles in their new surroundings. Refugees need to overcome their lack of English language skills, the difficulty securing employment and the vast cultural differences they encounter in our American society. Many are also dealing with the emotional impact of deaths or geographic separation from family and friends, and the frightening and dangerous causes of their original dislocation.

The two-day Annual Conference to be held April 3-4 features two outstanding keynote speakers, Jeanne A. Butterfield, Executive Director, American Immigration Lawyers Association and Mark Franken,



Jeanne A. Butterfield

Executive Director, Migration and Refugee Services, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Butterfield will discuss Immigration Reform: Fighting the Restrictionist Agenda. She will present information on restrictionist efforts to further curtail immigration in the context of immigration system reform. Butterfield contends that

understanding the restrictionist agenda is pivotal to effective opposition, and to continuing reforms that will lead to effective immigration reforms.

The American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) which Butterfield directs represents over 9,500 attorneys and law professors who practice and teach immigration law. They represent tens of thousands of U.S. families in permanent residence issues, and thousands of businesses who sponsor highly-skilled workers for admission to the U.S. on a temporary or permanent basis. Prior to joining AILA, Butterfield directed a pro bono refugee and asylum program in Boston and has served in private immigration law practice.

Franken will describe how the partnership between the public and private sectors has contributed to refugee resettlement success. He will also pursue opportunities to strengthen these collaborative programs. The Migration and Refugee Services, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "... carries out the commitment ... to serve and advocate for immigrants, refugees, migrants and people on the move."

Mark Franken

The conference affords an opportunity to learn, and share successes, ideas and concerns with experts and colleagues in varied aspects of refugee resettlement. The two-day event will encompass six primary topics: Education, Employment, Health, Refugee Services and MAA

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REGISTER TODAY

CALL 480.893.6110

OR E-MAIL

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT@KC-A.COM.

A LETTER FROM THE STATE COORDINATOR

Dear Friends,

Refugees resettling in Arizona bring with them enormous talent, expertise, and rich traditions. They also face the daunting task of rebuilding lives they have left behind by learning a new language, finding employment, adjusting to a new culture, and joining communities. They do this while simultaneously recovering from the trauma of war and persecution, the separation or loss of their family members, and years spent in refugee camps under harsh conditions before being resettled.

This year's Arizona Refugee Resettlement Program Conference focuses on refugee resettlement in consideration of such realities, and how we might better aid refugees as they make the transition to life in Arizona. This year's conference was developed based on recommendations from participants in prior years' conferences, emerging trends in refugee resettlement, and developing policies that impact refugees.

I hope that you will join this year's Conference for the excellent presentations, networking and learning opportunities, and a special dinner event featuring a pageant of traditional refugee dress and entertainment.

Warmly,



Charles Shipman
State Refugee Coordinator
Arizona Refugee Resettlement Program ■

BEYOND FLIGHT
REFUGEES IN ARIZONA
ALONG THE PATH OF FREEDOM LIE THE SEEDS OF HOPE



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ARIZONA REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM
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THANK YOU AND FAREWELL

We wish to share with you the expression of gratitude and well wishes from Nguyen Van Hanh former Director, Office of

Refugee Resettlement. Dr. Van Hanh sent the following letter January 6, 2006. ■

TO: State Refugee Coordinators
National Voluntary Agencies
Other Interested Parties

FROM: Nguyen Van Hanh, Ph.D., Director
Office of Refugee Resettlement

SUBJECT: Thank You and Farewell

I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude, respect and admiration for all of you who work tirelessly and unselfishly in the refugee resettlement program.

It has been a privilege and honor to serve as the Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement for the past five years. You have been key players and active partners in helping to shape refugee resettlement into a program that meets the needs of America's refugees both efficiently and effectively.

My self-imposed mandate for the refugee program when I came to Washington, D.C., five years ago was to keep an open mind about other people's ideas on what would make the refugee resettlement program a model for the 21st Century. There were many fine ideas, suggestions, and yes, complaints, about how to best operate the refugee program. The consultations I instituted when I came into the job as Director helped provide a national view of how we could all work together with the common aim of providing the most beneficial services and program to America's newcomers. For all the ideas, suggestions and yes, even the complaints, I want you to know that I appreciated each and every one of them.

One of my main interests in this position was to ensure the active participation and inclusion of the local community and faith-based organizations in the refugee network. I believe that this interest became a reality during my tenure as Director. I also believe that the resettlement program is a more effective one with community organization interest and involvement.

In closing, I have never forgotten why I was placed in the position as Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement: to insure that the refugee's interests would be foremost in planning programs, formulating public policy and implementing initiatives that would work. Thanks to your help and support over these past five years, I hope I was able to fulfill this vision.

I wish each and every one of you success in your work on behalf of and with America's refugees.

SIGNS OF PROGRESS

WAREHOUSING GAINS NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION

In 1993 refugees lived in "temporary" refugee camps for eight to nine years. By 2003, the average stay extended to 17 years and now 20 years is not uncommon. Entire generations have known nothing but a life without the freedom to work, freedom to own property or freedom of movement. They know decades without hope.

Finally there are some hopeful signs that protracted refugee dislocation is gaining more attention.

U.S. BUDGET

President Bush's fiscal year 2007 budget increases refugee program assistance by requesting \$893

million for the State Department Migration and Refugee Assistance funding and \$615 million for the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Refugee Resettlement. The budget also includes \$55 million to respond to unforeseen refugee crises.

November 10, 2005, the Foreign Operations spending bill which funds the refugee program passed the U.S. Congress. The language of the bill is significant in that it addresses specific refugee "warehousing" issues. The bill as reported in the November 2, 2005 Congressional Record H9503-H9504 states:

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MULTI-NATIONAL CORPS. FACE COCOA INDUSTRY CHILD SLAVE LABOR LAWSUIT

This past February 6, the first hearing was held in federal court in Los Angeles in a lawsuit filed against Nestle, Cargill, and Archer-Daniels-Midland (ADM) for permitting forced child labor to be used on their West African cocoa farms. Those who attended the first Trafficking breakout session at the 2005 Conference will recall the discussion concerning child slave labor in the cocoa industry in West Africa, particularly in the Ivory Coast. More than 70 percent of the world's cocoa market originates in West Africa, where the practice of forced child labor has continued since the 1800s.

The lawsuit was filed in 2005 on behalf of a class of Malian children who were trafficked from Mali to the Ivory Coast and forced to work in the cocoa bean



Young boy raking cocoa beans on drying rack at a family compound in the Soubré region

plantations. The children are forced to work 12 – 14 hour days, with little food, for no pay and were frequently subjected to beatings. San Francisco-based Global Exchange, a non-profit international rights organization and the Washington DC-based human rights group International Labor Rights Fund (ILRF) filed the lawsuit.

According to the International Labour Organization, UNICEF and the U.S. Department of State, today there are still approximately 280,000 children who work in the cocoa industry in the Ivory Coast alone. As many as 12,000 of these children have entered the child slavery market through trafficking. Low cocoa prices continue to make trafficked child labor forces attractive to the cocoa farmers. Often West African parents living in poverty sell their children to cocoa farmers hoping that the children will be able to make some money on their own.

Chocolate and cocoa industry representatives agreed in 2001 to work toward eliminating illegal child labor through voluntary participation in the Harkin-Engle protocol (named for U.S. Senator Harkin and Representative Engle). The purpose was to develop an industry-wide standard of certification to eliminate the worst forms of child labor, end hazardous working conditions and to ensure that working children are able to continue their education. The certification system was not completed by the established July 1, 2005 deadline, however the industry contends that it is still committed to developing a viable certification process in 50 percent of the cocoa growing areas in the Ivory Coast and Ghana by 2008.

As the ILRF lawsuit continues, renewed focus on the cocoa industry's forced child labor practices will likely bring additional pressure to speed the pace of the certification progress.



Young girl mulling wet cocoa beans at the family compound in the Soubré region.



Boys with their machetes used for cocoa harvesting in the Ivory Coast.

Photos used with permission, International Labor Rights Fund

HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIALS ADDRESS WAREHOUSING ISSUES

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"MIGRATION AND REFUGEE ASSISTANCE"

For expenses, not otherwise provided for, necessary to enable the Secretary of State to provide, as authorized by law ... That funds appropriated under this heading should be made available to develop effective responses to protracted refugee situations, including the development of programs to assist long-term refugee populations within and outside traditional camp settings that support refugees living or working in local communities such as integration of refugees into local schools and services, resource conservation projects and other projects designed to diminish conflict between refugee hosting communities and refugees, and encouraging dialogue among refugee hosting communities, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and international and nongovernmental refugee assistance organizations to promote the rights to which refugees are entitled under the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees of July 28, 1951 and the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, done at New York January 31, 1967."

TRANSFORMATIONAL DIPLOMACY

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced a new transformational diplomacy initiative January 16 that will coordinate the efforts of the State Department with those of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Secretary Rice nominated Ambassador Randall L. Tobias to the post of Director of Foreign Assistance. If confirmed, Ambassador Tobias, currently the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, would direct all Department of State and USAID programs and foreign assistance funding.

Secretary Rice has been outspoken for some time concerning the need for accountability and substantive results in foreign assistance planning and implementation. The transformational initiative is designed to coordinate State Department and USAID programs, to demonstrate that taxpayer dollars are being used effectively, and to ensure that foreign

"The transformational initiative is designed to coordinate State Department and USAID programs, to demonstrate that taxpayer dollars are being used effectively, and to ensure that foreign assistance positively impacts U.S. foreign policy aims abroad."

assistance positively impacts U.S. foreign policy aims abroad.

A U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI) February 8, 2006 press release recapped both the fiscal year 2007 budget and the restructuring of the State Department and USAID relationship as follows:

"Increases in refugee assistance funding in President Bush's fiscal year 2007 budget, coupled with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's new transformational diplomacy initiative, create an opportunity for the State Department to fund innovative assistance methods resulting in self-sufficiency and dignity for millions of warehoused refugees. Current forms of assistance that treat refugees as passive beneficiaries of aid are inconsistent with the President's call for freedom and the Secretary's demand for accountability and results in foreign assistance programming."

INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE ACTIVITY

Progress toward improving the plight of refugees is also being seen throughout the world. Some of the recent events include:

- Thailand's government has asked for international assistance to implement programs that provide education and work opportunities for the 150,000 Burmese refugees living in camps in Thailand.
- Malaysia has opened work opportunities for its Rohingya refugees.
- Assuming the Presidency of the European Union January 1, 2006, according to the Presidency's website, Austria plans to review legal instruments currently in place and carry out these projects in asylum, migration and border control:
 - "Work on a common European asylum system by enhancing practical cooperation between Member States, primarily by improving the exchange of information on countries of origin and work on a plan for an 'EU support team;'"
 - Cooperating with non-member countries in asylum and immigration issues, including carrying out pilot projects for protection in the region (Ukraine);
 - Pushing for the introduction of common visa-application offices;
 - Measures for an effective repatriation policy."



SPOTLIGHT ON MUTUAL ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATIONS

Each RRP Newsletter highlights an existing or new Arizona Mutual Assistance Association (MAA) organization. The Office of Refugee Resettlement defines an MAA as a nonprofit organization where at least 51% of the governing board is comprised of refugee or former refugee men and women. An MAA performs a vital role in refugee communities. These grassroots groups grow from shared community needs, choosing leaders to help further their integration into American society. The MAA executive structure provides a mechanism that addresses community-specific issues and is an integral link between the refugee community, the government and other community based resources. By sharing experiences and needs, listening and learning, MAAs play a vital role in refugee assimilation.

The Arizona Refugee Community Center (ARCC), lead by Program Director Rosalind Rivera, has been helping refugees integrate into Arizona communities and become self-sufficient since 1993. Originally founded by a group of Iraqi refugees, the organization was named the Iraqi Association of Arizona. The Association merged with the Arizona International Refugee Consortium, Inc., until it closed in May 2000.



In October 2000, the Iraqi Association reopened in a new facility to serve the greater refugee community. The MAA changed its name to

Women seamstresses gathering at their November pillow sale.

ORR DIRECTOR ANNOUNCED

On February 22, Secretary Leavitt announced Martha Newton will assume leadership as Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement. Newton has served as the Acting Deputy Under Secretary for International Affairs in the Bureau of International Labor Affairs at the Department of Labor since May 2005.

Prior to her Acting Deputy Under Secretary position, she served in the Bureau of International Labor Affairs at the Department of Labor. She has worked on human trafficking forced labor issues during her tenure as chief of the Crime victims Services Division for the State of Illinois. ■



The English as a Second Language classes are popular with refugees from many countries.

the Arizona Refugee Community Center in February 2002 to reflect the diversity of the refugee population it serves—refugees from Afghanistan, Bosnia, Burma, Burundi, Cuba, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Kosovo, Liberia, Russia, Serbia, Somali, Sudan and Vietnam. ARCC is a non-profit organization providing programs and support for all ages within the refugee community including:

- English as a Second Language classes in partnership with Rio Salado Community College
- After school tutoring programs in partnership with the International Rescue Committee
- Job search and job application assistance
- Citizenship courses in partnership with the Area Agency on Aging
- Youth activities and support programs to help refugee youths learn about the positive aspects of American culture and to gain a sense of belonging and hope for the future
- Women's support programs that help women acquire the skills to find employment and to fully participate in their new communities
- Women's Microenterprise Project in partnership with Shiloh Community Church to give women with no business experience the opportunity to learn the skills needed to start a small business. The Microenterprise program also operates the Pillow Project, enabling women to use their sewing skills making designer pillows to augment family income.

It has been more than two years since AARC has received federal funding, yet the organization continues to provide daily support to more than 100 refugee families. ARCC is located at 4788 W. Bethany Home Road #A, Glendale, Arizona 85301. ARCC contact information is: phone: 623-931-9240; fax: 623-931-9247 or e-mail info@arizonarefugee.org. You can also visit www.arizonarefugee.org for more information. ■

RRP ANNUAL CONFERENCE

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Development. Continuing a course thread from the 2005 Conference, there are also two sessions on Human Trafficking. Sessions will address:

EDUCATION

How resettlement affects youths and services and tools for educators and students; Pima College Digital Stories project and teaching children who are illiterate in their own languages; parenting issues refugee parents face, recommendations and resource Toolkit; implementing translation and interpreter services at Paradise Valley Unified School District; an overview of the support services being implemented for Alhambra Elementary School District students.

EMPLOYMENT

Misconceptions concerning hiring immigrant professionals, the advantages they can bring in our increasingly global business environments and tools to simplify the hiring process; workshop focusing on how to assist refugees in becoming economically independent through savings and small business development; benefits of hiring refugees from employers' perspectives; innovative solutions for employment transportation issues in a "car culture"; EEOC introduction to workplace discrimination laws;

HEALTH

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention proposed tuberculosis screening and treatment guidelines and their potential impact; refugee health issues including acute illness, mental health issues, chronic illness and models for care and improving refugee healthcare; elder refugees and naturalization criteria, and Certification for Disability Exceptions.

REFUGEE SERVICES

How community programs Welcome to America Project and Iskash*taa help refugees rebuild their lives; landlord/tenant relationships and mediation; models to assist refugees in maintaining safe, stable families during resettlement challenges; necessity for immigrants to understand their legal rights and avoid falling prey to disreputable immigration advisors; building trusting relationships between law enforcement and the refugee communities; deportation issues; U.S. entrance policies for Cuban and Haitian refugees/entrants.

MAA DEVELOPMENT

Building partnerships and growing your organization; fundraising strategies to meet MAA operating and program costs; strategic planning

and start-up issues MAA's face; discussion with MAA leaders.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

How to identify and work with child trafficking victims; anti-trafficking criminal justice panel discusses investigation, enforcement and prosecution.

The comprehensive agenda also includes round table discussions on refugee child care, cultural profiles of new refugee arrivals and an overview of anti-trafficking and law and policy.

The Monday evening dinner promises to be an exciting and engaging celebration again this year. Colorful traditional dress from refugee's original homes and lively musical entertainment will light up the stage. Honorees of the Arizona Refugee Champions (ARC) Award and the Arizona Refugee Resettlement Honors award will also be announced. The ARC Award is given to a non-refugee service professional who has contributed significantly to the advancement of refugee resettlement and the betterment of refugees' lives in Arizona. The Arizona Refugee Resettlement Honors serves as a tribute to an Arizona refugee resettlement professional for outstanding service to provide hope and opportunity to refugees fleeing persecution and tyranny.

The Annual Conference will be held at the Black Canyon Conference Center, 9440 N. 25th Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85021. For registration information, call 480.893.6110 or e-mail refugeeresettlement@kc-a.com. ■

Mark Your Calendar
Arizona Refugee Resettlement
Program Annual Conference
April 3 – 4, 2006

BEYOND FLIGHT
REFUGEES IN ARIZONA
ALONG THE PATH OF FREEDOM LIE THE SEEDS OF HOPE

Monday April 3 - 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Gala Dinner 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Tuesday April 4, - 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Black Canyon Conference Center,
9440 N. 25th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85021

RRP PICNIC: ANOTHER BIG SUCCESS

More than 400 refugees and families, Arizona Refugee Resettlement staff and volunteers from many organizations gathered at Cortez Park Saturday, November 19 for the Annual Refugee Resettlement Program picnic.

The event was organized by the Refugee Advisory Council on Crime (RACC) which is cochaired by Lt. Warren Taylor with the City of Phoenix Police Department and Dragan Subotic of Lutheran Social Ministries of the Southwest. The RACC, VOLAGS and many volunteers were responsible for planning the well-attended event.



Eager picnickers gathered around as community volunteers manned the grills and barbequed steaks and hamburgers. Community organizations and VOLAGs contributed paper products, drinks, delicious side dishes and desserts. Volunteers and VOLAG staff chipped in, setting up and manning the food tables. The afternoon was spent socializing and competing in sack races, tug-of-war and other traditional American picnic games. Thanks to everyone who helped make the day a success. ■



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